

Teacher Training Handbook, No. 5

Presbyterian Church in
Canada

Sabbath School Methods:

STUDIES IN TEACHING
AND
ORGANIZATION

BY

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Sabbath School Methods:

Studies in Teaching and Organization

CHAPTER I.

THE TEACHER : HIS TASK AND QUALIFICATIONS

The Teacher's Task

To understand one's task is the first essential for the doing of it. The true function of the school, the church, and the home, is to form the highest type of character in all those who come within their influence. And since the perfect ideal of human character has once been realized on the earth, we may sum up all statements of the teacher's task by saying that he is to seek the realization of the Christ-character in each of his pupils. To accomplish this in a human being is to make him all that he ought to be, all that we could desire him to be. To succeed perfectly with one pupil would be to give him a clear mind, a true heart, and a loyal will ; and to place him upon such an elevation of character, that thenceforth he would live the most effective life, both in the present, and in the eternal future.

Stimulation Rather than Information

The pupil is a living, self-active being, who cannot be made wise and pure and good from without, but must become so from within. We can neither convey ideas into his mind nor impart purity to his will, in the sense in which one conveys furniture into a room or imparts purity to a vessel by washing. The child is so constituted that his active concurrence must take place at every step in the process of his

training. The teacher's task is to evoke that active concurrence and to direct that native energy.

The Child an Imitator

One of the earliest and most important forms of this activity is imitation. The teacher should seek to present only worthy models for the child's imitation, while at the same time developing in him a higher form of activity than mere copying ; that is to say, the free, creative spirit.

Let us understand, then, how far our responsibility extends. There are some things we cannot do. We cannot make the will of the pupil good at our pleasure, any more than we can add a cubit to his stature. There are some questions which must be settled between him and God. But we are responsible for the use we make of every opportunity to exert an influence favorable to the right settlement of those questions.

The Teacher's Qualifications

These are determined by the nature of his task. What sort of man, then, should he be, who would undertake to teach : who would lead the pupil's mind in the way of wisdom, his heart in the way of purity, and his will in the way of righteousness ?

Personal Character

The first qualification for every teacher, but especially for the Sunday School teacher, is personal character. Seeing that his pupils are so likely to copy him, he should strive to be all that he would have them to be. He should be courteous in manner, chaste in speech, and tidy in person ; for these things will tend to get themselves reproduced in his pupils. He should see to it that no suggestion of evil is conveyed to their minds by his personality. And he should never forget that all these external things,

to have their proper effect, must be the genuine expression of a true character. Children are quick to detect the counterfeit and to despise it. The teacher must himself be a genuine man and a true Christian.

Knowledge of the Word

His second qualification is knowledge. He desires to saturate the pupil's life with the truth ; he must therefore have understanding of the truth, of the pupil, and of the best way to bring these two into vital connection.

He should know the truth : all truth, so far as possible ; but especially and indispensably, the truth contained in the scriptures. He should be first and foremost a student of the Bible, increasing daily in his knowledge of its facts, in his comprehension of its doctrines, and in his absorption of its spirit.

Knowledge of the Pupil

The teacher must understand his pupil, as well as his Bible. These, indeed, are his two books, which he should diligently study. He should study the child, not merely with a view to what he may become when he is a man, but also with a view to what he is now, and may be, as a child. Childhood is precious in itself, and not merely for what it may lead to. We err when we think of children solely in the future tense.

Study of the pupil can be carried on in various ways : by observation of his words and actions ; by friendly intercourse with him, calculated to put us in possession of his point of view and enable us to sympathise with him ; and by harking back occasionally to our own childhood, and recollecting how we felt and thought and acted before we " put away childish things."

Knowledge of Sound Method

The teacher must know how to teach, for this is his business. Yet if he understands thoroughly the truth he is to teach, and the pupil whom he is to teach, he will not have much difficulty about method. He will skilfully adapt his method, or way of teaching, to the nature and needs of his pupils, and to the kind of truth he is teaching. Something more will be said on the subject of method in a later chapter.

The Standpoint of Jesus

The teacher's supreme qualification is the ability to place himself in the standpoint of Jesus : to see everything as He saw it, or as nearly so as possible ; to feel as He felt, about everything ; to love the truth as He loved it ; to love the child as He loved him ; to be willing to serve and sacrifice as He served and sacrificed ; to give not merely time and energy and knowledge, but to give *himself* for the realization of God's kingdom on earth.

The Demands of the Work

These qualifications, it will be seen, are many and varied. The teacher's work makes demands upon all his powers. It enlists his whole heart and soul and mind and strength. It requires that he shall be wise, and tactful, and loving, and persistent, and patient, with the very patience of the Christ. The qualifications are high because the work is high. Almost anyone can shovel sand into a cart ; very few could plan a great cathedral ; who is able to teach a human soul ?

CHAPTER II.

THE TEACHER : HIS PREPARATION

Real success in any calling is achieved as truly in the previous preparation as in the hour of decisive action. Some of the most potent factors in a Sunday School teacher's success are in operation long before he begins to teach.

In the actual work of teaching three things are involved, namely, the teacher, the lesson, and the pupil. Each of these, therefore, needs preparation ; and if any one of them is unprepared, or ill-prepared, the highest success is impossible.

The Teacher's Preparation of Himself

Truth and personality, says Phillips Brooks, are the two essentials in preaching. They are also the two essentials in teaching ; and the teacher's mastery of himself is as important as his mastery of the lesson. He may do as much by the spirit that animates him as by the knowledge he imparts. There are persons whose very presence is a benediction ; and such persons are to a Sunday School what sunshine is to a flower garden. All are not equally gifted with these gracious qualities ; but everyone can do something to cultivate them in himself. Every teacher should try to form the habit of thinking earnestly about his scholars and their spiritual interests ; about the great truths he is to teach ; and about the whole purpose for which the school exists and for which all his work therein should be done ; until the momentous importance of that work gets full possession of him, and his passion for the truth and for souls begins to resemble that of his divine Master.

This cannot be done by intermittent application. It is the constant doing of a thing that forms a

habit in us. If you wish to form the habit of early rising, you simply rise early every morning, until it becomes easy to do so. And as you become an early riser by early rising, so you become a devoted Sunday School worker by devoting yourself to Sunday School work, until that devotion becomes a life habit.

The teacher's preparation of himself is intellectual, moral, and spiritual. He will saturate his mind with all truth, and seek the broadest culture possible in the circumstances in which he is placed. He will form the habit of spiritual fellowship—with the best men and women within his reach, and, above all, with the Master. He will study carefully the best methods of carrying on his work ; recognising the fact that even religious work is the better for being done according to scientific principles. If there is a helpful book or periodical, or a teacher training class, within his reach, he will avail himself of it. Yet he will anticipate and supplement these aids by his own private study and prayer.

The Teacher's Preparation of the Lesson

There are all degrees of preparation, from the faintest and most hastily-snatched inkling of what the lesson is about, and where it may be found, to the most complete mastery of it and everything connected with it. No teacher should be satisfied with the former ; few teachers have opportunity for the latter, yet it should be the steady aim.

A thorough acquaintance with the facts of the lesson, a clear grasp of its doctrinal teachings, and an understanding of the point of application to the scholar's life, are the teacher's chief requisites in the way of knowledge. To have the facts "at his fingers' ends," he should go over them frequently, beginning a good while in advance. He should look, not merely at the facts of the lesson itself, but take them in connection with what precedes, and

with what follows. If the lesson deals with Elijah under the juniper tree, he will have clearly in his mind, not merely the lonely and discouraged prophet, but the events that led up to his flight and despondency, and the events through which his pessimism was changed to optimism in the days that followed. He will dwell upon the facts, picturing before his mind the persons and incidents, causes and effects, until they stand out vividly, and are indelibly impressed.

Having the facts all clearly in mind, so that he need not refer even to his Bible to find them, the teacher's next step is to determine at what point to begin in teaching, and in what order to proceed. Similarly with the doctrinal teachings. He should decide beforehand whether it is better to try to exhaust the lesson, or simply to teach its most vital truth. If the former, then he must determine the order in which the truths are to be dealt with. If the latter, then he must make up his mind which is the most vital truth in the lesson, having regard to all the members of the class, and all the circumstances governing the case.

The Teacher's Preparation of his Pupils

"How can I prepare my pupils?" some teacher may ask. In several ways. First, by cultivating such personal relations with each pupil, outside the school as well as in it, and on all other days as well as the Lord's Day, as will tend to inspire his respect for your character, his confidence in your judgment, and his interest in anything you may have to say. Secondly, by giving each scholar some work to do a week in advance, and calling for the results of that work at the proper time. Thirdly, by teaching each lesson in such a way as not only to "cause the pupils to know" that particular lesson, as Dr. Trumbull would say, but also to

awaken an expectant interest in the lessons that are to follow in the series. Some series of lessons lend themselves better than others to this process. Such a series as that embracing the wilderness wanderings of the Israelites, or the missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul, are admirably adapted for this purpose.

CHAPTER III.

THE BIBLE : AS A WHOLE AND BY BOOKS

The Seed, the Sower, and the Soil

The great Teacher, setting forth in parables the nature of the Kingdom, likened the divine Word to good seed, and the human heart to soil, which may be hard and beaten with the feet of passers by, or infested with noxious weeds, or full of stones, or rich and fertile. The figure is a most appropriate one ; and it teaches us, amongst other things, that there must be not only impartation, but reproduction and multiplication. The seed is not merely cast into the soil ; it comes back again multiplied, thirty, sixty, or an hundred fold. This means that the truth contained in the Word is to be translated into human life ; it is to be sown in the form of precept and example ; it is to come back in the form of conduct and character.

The skilful sower understands what to sow and how to sow it. He knows whether the grain he carries is pure wheat, or mixed with other things. He knows how much to sow on a given quantity of soil, and he knows when the soil is ready for the seed.

So the teacher should know his Bible. The seed is the Word of God. He must "rightly divide." He must be skilful in implanting the truth, and wise in adapting it to the intelligence of his scholars.

The Bible, the Book, and the Lesson

On any particular Sabbath, the teacher is specially concerned with a selected passage, -the lesson for the day. But this lesson forms part of a book, perhaps Genesis or Matthew ; and this book is a part of the larger whole. The teacher should be a diligent student, not only of the special lesson, but of the whole book, and of the entire Bible.

The Bible as a Whole

In the Bible we have the record of God's communications to men, made "at sundry times and in divers manners." Sometimes He speaks in type and symbol and ceremonial ; sometimes in providential dispensation ; sometimes in prophetic revelation. He speaks now by a prophet, now by a priest, now by a king. Again His spokesman is a gallant soldier, an illustrious statesman, a sublime poet, a profound philosopher, a skilled physician, an illiterate fisherman, or a herdman from the hills of Tekoa. The form of the communication is varied, and the human agencies are remote from one another in time and place and circumstance ; and yet the "burden" is everywhere the same. The theme is one. And therefore the different parts of the Bible, being mutually explanatory, should all be studied. The teacher will compare scripture with scripture. He will seek to know the Bible as a whole.

External and Internal Study

By the external study of the Bible I mean such study as gives us general information about the Bible ; the circumstances under which it was pro-

duced, and the manner in which it assumed its present form ; the times, places, persons, and conditions, with which it deals : the languages in which it was written, and the various translations that have been made ; the classification of its books into historical, prophetic, poetical, etc. ; the division of the history into epochs and movements of vital importance ; the discovery of the meaning of each great event, the relation of events to one another, and the purpose that dominates the whole ; the effort to see the beginning in the light of the end, and the end in the light of the beginning.

By the internal study of the Bible I mean the effort to grasp its spiritual message ; to know what it has to say to the heart of man ; to catch the sound of that refrain that runs through it all, now with accelerated, now with retarded movement ; now with a crashing as of a mighty thunder-bolt, now with the still small voice, just making itself heard in the soul's silence. This internal study is the more important of the two. The other is valuable, this is indispensable.

Telescopic and Microscopic Study

We should sometimes read rapidly, so as to get a connected view of a large portion, — a telescopic or bird's-eye view. At other times we should read slowly, covering only a small portion at a sitting, so as to get the close-range, or microscopic view. The two methods should supplement each other ; and both should be supplemented by frequent intervals of silent, devout meditation.

Receptive and Constructive Study

As you read, banish pre-conceptions, and let the Book *make its own impression* upon you. Read with close attention and frequent repetition. Then follow your reading with independent construction ;

thinking the whole passage through again in your own way, putting your own personality into it, and construing it from your own point of view. The whole Bible, and each part of it, should be read in these two ways : first with the receptive mind, and then with active, independent construction. By the first you escape the pitfalls of " private interpretation " ; by the second you rise out of the bondage of the letter, into the liberty of the spirit.

Bible Study by Books

What we have said regarding the study of the Bible as a whole, applies in all essential respects to the study of it by books. Instead, therefore, of repeating, let us take a single book by way of illustration, and jot down a few specimen questions and suggestions for the teacher who proposes studying that book.

Example : The Book of The Acts

Read the book once through rapidly, not stopping to solve difficulties, turn up references, or consult commentaries. Then close the book and ask yourself what thought is dominant in your mind. What general impression has the book made upon you ? What seems to be its main purpose ? How does it begin and end ? Is it historical, prophetic, or poetical ? Does it connect itself with other books of the Bible ? With which does it connect itself most closely ? **With what age of the world, and with what sort of people, is it occupied ?** Who are the principal characters in it ? Does the author tell you anything about himself ? Does he seem to be a learned man ; and if so, does he show general culture, or special knowledge, or both ? Does he stand closely related to any of the characters in the book ? Is he an eye-witness, or a participant in any of the recorded events ? What places are

visited, what words spoken, what things done, and with what result ?

Read the book through again ; and then ask yourself into what broad prominent divisions it most readily falls. Make these main divisions as few, as broad, and as well-marked, as possible. Get some short, characteristic name for each division.

Then read the first division through by itself as a whole, and keep on the alert to see all that there is in it for you. Focus attention on the incidents, so that they shall be remembered. Correlate the incidents into a continuous and luminous narrative. Open out your whole mind for the reception of the truth here taught ; and then lay the book aside and think your independent way through the entire portion, going over it many times if necessary, to fix it permanently. Open the book and read again the parts that have slipped from your mind. Meditate upon the meaning. Go through the other divisions in the same manner. Then make subdivisions, and treat them as you have treated the main divisions.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LESSON : KINDS OF LESSON MATERIAL

In addition to that general preparation which is obtained by studying the Bible as a whole, and book by book, we must consider the special preparation of the lesson for the coming Sabbath. So far as the method of study is concerned, we cannot add anything to what was said in the last chapter. Each individual lesson should be studied according

to the principles there laid down in regard to the Bible and its books. We may therefore pass on to consider the various kinds of material which the lesson may contain.

History, Biography, Doctrine, Devotion, Practice

Some lesson material is mainly historical (as in 1 Kings 12), some biographical (as in Genesis 37), some doctrinal (as in Romans 6), some devotional (as in Psalm 67), while some consists of specific exhortation, bearing directly upon conduct (as in Ephesians 6). Few passages, however, are exclusively of one character, though many are predominantly so.

The Historical Lesson

There are two main ideas in all history ; the first is cause, and the second is purpose. All events in history may be viewed from these two standpoints : as the effects of causes, and as factors in the working out of a supreme plan. The death of Christ, for example, is first of all a fact, determined by its own causes, and necessarily coming to pass when once the causes are in operation. But it is also a factor in the working out of a great purpose in the mind of God. So Peter speaks of the Christ as not only " taken by wicked hands, and crucified and slain," but also as " delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God."

In our study of a historical lesson we should explore the whole network of causes leading up to the events that compose the lesson, and the whole network of effects that follow from those events. This gives us the lesson in its widest setting or context, and illustrates the value of telescopic study, as already explained.

But there is another reason for studying the historical lesson in the way indicated. Historical

facts, though highly interesting and important and constituting often the easiest means of approach to the mind, are always less important than the spiritual truth which they embody. And the truth is to be found chiefly by looking at the facts from the high standpoints of cause and purpose. Isolated facts, as such, are of comparatively small moment. Even the great tragedy of Calvary, viewed simply as a historical fact, might take its place among the many murders that have disgraced human history, and be forgotten as they are forgotten. But when considered in the light of all the causes out of which it arose, extending back even to the beginning, and in the light of all the effects to which it is leading and will lead, through the great unending future, how momentous it becomes, and how full of the divinest significance. The historical lesson, then, should be prepared not only with a view to all that it contains as fact, but also with a view to all that it teaches as truth. And we should try to teach it in such a way that our pupils will understand not only what happened, but how it happened, and why, and this in the largest sense of the terms.

The Biographical Lesson

For the teacher of young children, probably no other material is quite equal in value to the records of individual lives. And in the Bible we have biographical material which is unequalled for the simple beauty of its form, and the educative value of its content. But the teacher who uses this material should cultivate diligently the art of narration. To be able to tell a story well is a prime qualification for the teacher, especially for the primary teacher. And to tell a story well, one must so thoroughly appropriate it and make it his own, that in the telling, all the characters live and act.

as it were, before the eyes of those who listen. A good story-teller is a transparent medium, through whom the light of the incidents shines without interruption.

The Doctrinal Lesson

In preparing to teach a doctrinal lesson, we should do at least four things :—(1) Thoroughly master the doctrinal matter. Know what the lesson says, not only in itself, but also in the light of other passages that help to explain it. (2) Study the relation between the doctrinal matter and the historical or concrete, if there be any, so as to present the abstract in the concrete setting. (3) Carefully consider how to clothe the profound doctrine of the lesson in language intelligible to the pupils. (4) Ponder the relation between the doctrines contained in the lesson and the ideas already familiar to the mind of the child. If the lesson has to do with obedience, for example, consider what ideas and experiences the pupils have, belonging to that realm. This, indeed, is a principle which we must emphasise at every point, namely, that our teaching must link itself on to what the pupils already know, and must not be left hanging in the air. Otherwise it will soon be forgotten.

The Devotional Lesson

The effects of a devotional lesson are to be sought for in the cultivation of the emotions rather than in that of the intellect. And yet our feelings are dependent upon our thoughts, and the emotions you shall be able to arouse in the heart of your pupil will depend on your success in filling his mind with the right sort of ideas. Great skill is required, then, in the presentation of the thoughts that underlie the devotional lesson. Perhaps nowhere else are we in so much danger of tumbling from the

ardine to the religious. Much depends on the habitual demeanor of the teacher in the presence of his pupils, his devotional habit of mind. If they have seen so little of the truly devout in him as to find it difficult to connect devotion with his personality, both they and he will have trouble in getting on with a devotional lesson. This is largely, then, a question of spiritual atmosphere, and such lessons cannot be prepared in a day, seeing that they are the outcome of character and life-habit.

The Practical Lesson

While in fact lessons are more or less practical, some are extremely concrete and specific in their bearing upon the daily life of the pupil. To teach such lessons, we must know just how and where they bear upon it; that is to say, what the "point of contact" is, between the truth and the pupil's life. For example, the first verse of the twelfth of Romans, though a direct exhortation, is nevertheless a general proposition. It must somehow be brought to bear. The teacher must think, not only of the command to present the body a living sacrifice, as a general statement; he must think also how each scholar can be made to see clearly what it means specifically for him to present his body a living sacrifice. It is largely a question of finding the relation between the general and the special, and the point of concrete application to the pupil's individual life. To do this is to succeed in the teaching of the practical lesson.

CHAPTER V

THE LESSON: ANALYSIS AND TEACHING PLANS

By analysis is meant the arrangement of the material contained in the lesson, with all the parts,

and the relations of the parts clearly in the teacher's mind. By a teaching programme I mean to plan and purpose as to the order in which these parts shall be taken up in the class, and the manner in which they shall be presented.

The wisdom of making analyses, and planning out beforehand the way of presentation, will hardly be questioned. To be satisfied with improvising teaching by way of presentation, and to trust to the happy inspiration of the moment in teaching, is to court defeat; and this in spite of the fact that happy inspiration does sometimes visit a teacher at the moment of teaching. Careful preparation is nevertheless the way to success.

It is not the intention to give here a fixed plan, or a definite type of analysis, to be rigidly adhered to in all cases; but rather to suggest certain principles, which may be more or less applied, on in the lessons prepared from time to time by the teacher. If there is one thing to be avoided than another, it is to stick to a fixed, or to some fixed form, merely because it has been found of some authority, or even because it has been found to work well in some cases. Avoid, above all things, being wooden and formal. Do your own thing, but do not be a slave to any plan. Think out every lesson afresh, in the light of past experience, and in view of the pupils to whom, and the circumstances under which, you are to teach it. This is the only way to keep alive in Sunday School work.

Lesson Analysis.

1. To discover what is contained in the lesson, and separate these clearly from one another in your own mind. First, what facts or incidents are there? Make sure of these first of all. In such a lesson as Acts 12:1-17, for example, go over the incidents, picturing everything in the

imagination, until the sequence of events is perfectly clear :—the cruel king, the imprisoned apostle, the praying church, the strong angel, the severed fetters, the opening doors, the joyous damsel, the doubting church, etc. Then look for the teaching underlying these facts :—the liability of the godly to persecution, the power of prayer, the weakness of iron bars and prison walls and imperial legions, the overruling of human deeds for the divine glory (James was slain, Peter delivered), etc. (2) Ask yourself how best to correlate these different sorts of material one to another, so that the lesson shall be a unity amid a variety. (3) Bring the lesson into relation with preceding and succeeding events, on the historical side, and the teaching of the lesson into relation with other cases teaching the same or similar truth. Find other Herods in the New Testament, and study their characters. Compare this persecution with other persecutions, before and since. Recall the experiences of the Old Testament worthies (see Heb. 11: 32-40), of Jesus, of Stephen, of Paul. Be clear as to the causes, reasons, and results, of these various persecutions. Compare the deliverance recorded here with other similar instances. (4) Ask yourself what there is in the lesson that can be directly applied to the conduct and life of your pupils. Seek diligently for the avenue of approach to each personality in the class. But this leads to the next point.

Teaching Plans

In the former section we have spoken of the pre-arrangement of the lesson material ; here we shall have in mind the way of presentation. The great question, in planning to teach a lesson, is how best to approach the mind of the pupil. All analyses and plans are but means to the scholar's good.

They must therefore be adjusted to him, not he to them.

If your pupils are young, make the narrative element in the lesson very prominent. Prepare the story with special care. The spiritual teaching must find its way to the young child's mind and heart in story guise. If your pupils are older, the doctrinal element may to some extent be separated from the story element; and if you are teaching a class of thoughtful adults, you may occupy the greater part of the lesson hour with the doctrinal and practical parts, dwelling on the facts only long enough to fix them in the mind.

Plan for each Individual

Do not be satisfied with adjusting your teaching to the class in a general way; but adjust it to each member of the class. Study each individual, and have a fixed resolve that every one shall get something worth while out of each lesson taught. Ask yourself what thoroughfare there is into the pupil's mind for the truth you bring; what kinship between the things already familiar to him and the things you would have him learn out of the lesson.

Questioning versus Telling

"Telling is not teaching," says a high authority; and certainly he who talks continuously to his class, telling them all that is in the lesson, and going on to exhort and enforce, the class meanwhile sitting in silence, cannot be certain that he has taught anything. And yet there are some things that must be told to the class. Any fact which no one in the class has any other means of knowing, must be told by the teacher to the pupils. And if he has their attention and interest while he tells it, and if their minds take hold upon it and hold it fast, then he has "caused them to know it," and

he has done this by telling. Telling is sometimes teaching ; if it were not so, the story would be useless as a means of instruction. But, in general, telling should be accompanied by questioning, and, for the most part, anything that has been elicited from the pupil by questioning, should not be conveyed to him in the form of information. We shall discuss the art of questioning more fully in a later chapter ; at present we merely emphasise the need, on the one hand, of carefully planning our questions beforehand, and on the other, of keeping the mind open for new questions that may suggest themselves to the mind of teacher or scholar during the teaching period. Do not come to the class with a rigid determination to ask only a certain pre-arranged list of questions, in a certain fixed order, and to insist upon getting certain fixed answers to them. Be thoroughly prepared, and have your own ideas clear as to the order of procedure ; but be elastic, and hold yourself in readiness for unforeseen effects, due to the play of the living mind upon the living mind in the schoolroom.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SCHOLAR : STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

The teacher has to do with the living Word and the living soul : with the truth that makes us free, and with the human being, capable of the highest spiritual freedom, or the lowest spiritual bondage.

Children Alike and yet Different

While in some general features all our pupils are alike, in other respects they differ widely from one another. Moreover, each individual goes through

a constant process of development, so that he is not the same at different periods of his life. We must be on the watch for these things, so that our teaching shall adapt itself to the requirements of the pupil, and we shall "conquer a child nature by obeying it."

How far all Children are Alike

(1) The child's experience is limited, and this limits the range of his ideas. Yet we shall often be surprised at the clearness of his intellectual vision, and the unclouded character of his faith. His mind is like the clear glass that lets the pure white sunlight in, rather than like the prism that breaks it up into its component rays. It is for this reason that some things, hid from the wise and prudent, are revealed to babes. We must neither over-estimate nor under-estimate our pupil's mind-power. We must neither offend his faith by premature critical analyses, nor affront his intelligence by superfluous explanations. (2) Every child lives largely in the realm of the concrete and pictorial. We should, therefore, make skilful appeals to the eye, the ear, and the imagination. Childhood is also, on the whole, the most favorable time for memory work. (3) Most children are warmly affectionate. Their feelings are not so deep and full of passion as those of adults, nor are they so likely to cherish their likes and dislikes; but the "open sesame" to the child's whole nature is by way of his affections. Cultivate the love of your pupil, but always as a means of bringing him to love the truth you teach, and the Christ you represent. (4) Children, as a rule, are prone to believe what we say, and to copy what we do. The moral of this is obvious. The teacher's words should be true, and his actions good. (5) Children are full of restless activity. We should utilize

not repress, this activity. An orderly school is not necessarily one in which every scholar is still, but rather one in which every scholar is busy.

Childhood, Boyhood, Youth, Manhood

Having considered some outstanding features of the child-mind in general, let us now study some characteristics of mind development, and the best way of adapting our teaching to this. A rough but serviceable division of human life has been made, into childhood, boyhood, youth, and manhood ; assigning six or seven years to each of the first three. We shall follow this division.

Childhood

The teacher of children (up to the age of six or seven) may expect to find that sweet, beautiful innocence, which is as much a negative as a positive quality, the result, partly at least, of lack of experience and limitation of knowledge. He will find that love of the concrete and pictorial, that vividness of imagination, that credulity and imitativeness, that warmth of affection, and that restless energy, of which we have spoken ; and he must present his subject-matter in simple, sensuous pictures ; must not insist on enforcing abstract truth, except as it lies embedded in these concrete forms ; and must enlist the child's activity by giving him something to do which is within his power, and which he will be interested in doing.

Boyhood

The teacher of boys and girls (up to the age of twelve or fourteen) will find a greater strength of intellect than in the former age, and an activity that is coming more definitely under control of the intelligence. The memory and the imagination are equally vigorous and tenacious, but more

purposeful. Castles in the air are built, and large plans laid as to future careers.

For these very reasons the boy and the girl may be less tractable than the child. The developing will is sometimes wilful. The teacher's care should be to develop a healthy will-growth, neither asphyxiated by undue repression, nor spoiled by over-laxity. Wise guidance should be the aim. Direct the boy's thinking by suggestions, but leave him free to think, and give him time to think. Direct his will into right channels by suggestions, and even by commands, but seek to win his *free* choice of the good, and to stimulate his spontaneous activity.

Youth

The teacher of youths and maidens (roughly, those in their teens, or of high school and college age) will find that he is dealing, not with a new order of beings, but with beings who are beginning to take in new orders of ideas, and to be moved by new feelings and motives. He must expect a great widening of the horizon, a rapid expansion of the mental powers, and a deepening and broadening of the sympathies and antipathies. Serious spiritual upheaval, doubts and fears, conviction of sin, and emotions that easily become morbid if not wisely treated, are specially characteristic of this age. The teacher should be deeply sympathetic, should have a healthy spiritual experience of his own, and should be able to appreciate the sentiments which show themselves in his pupils, without fostering in them such morbid feelings as those to which the dime novelist is wont to cater.

He may come into contact with doubts and sceptical inquiries. He should not frown upon these, but try to understand them, so as to lead the doubting soul, not so much away from his

doubts, as through them to higher ground. The ability to answer all the questions of youth is not an essential. The questions of youth are often the very ones over which the world's wisest men have pondered long without reaching final answers ; he who seeks to settle them by glib, ready-made answers, will convict himself of shallowness and insincerity. What the teacher of youth especially needs is not omniscience, but sympathy, and the ability to approach the great things of the inner life with courtesy, reverence, and patience. His own life should bear witness to the fact that he is standing fast, not because he can solve all the problems, but because his trust is in the living God.

Manhood

The greatest difficulty in teaching adult classes arises usually from their heterogeneous make-up. The class is likely to contain persons differing widely in age, in knowledge, in faith, in moral integrity, and in religious devotion. You may find here, what you will find nowhere else in the school, namely the religious hobbyist : that is to say, the person who has given so much attention to some one doctrine of the Bible, that he has almost lost the power to see anything else but that doctrine in the lesson, no matter what the lesson may be about. The religious hobbyist always has a narrow and distorted view, not only of truth in general, but even of that very truth to which he clings so fondly, and into whose discussion he so persistently tries to drag the class on all occasions.

We can only say here what we say elsewhere : get acquainted with each individual so far as possible ; know your Bible as thoroughly as possible, prepare for all sorts of problems and difficulties ; do not stifle discussion, so long as it is reverent and relevant ; and pray for patience and devotion in your work.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SCHOLAR: DIFFERENCES OF TEMPERAMENT, ETC.

Not only are there differences in the same individual at different stages of his development, but there are differences among individuals as to temperament, disposition, and mental and moral power

Sensory and Motor

Our pupils do not all receive in the same way the impressions that come to them, nor react in the same way to those impressions. Some persons seem absorbed in what you are saying to them, or in what you are showing to them, to such an extent, that their response by words or movements is comparatively tardy. Others seem always keyed up for instantaneous movement. They answer before you have completed your question ; they act without waiting to hear the whole of your wishes. These two types have been named the sensory and the motor.

The pupil of the motor type may be somewhat deficient in accuracy. Encourage him to stop and think before answering your question. Ask him occasionally to repeat the question, before giving his answer, so as to make sure that he knows exactly what the question is. Stimulate the sensory child to prompter action by the suggestive force of your own manner. Be a gentle rein to the one pupil, and a gentle spur to the other.

Clever and Dull

Some pupils are much brighter than others intellectually. A good deal of patient attention should be given to the dull child. If one form of presentation fails, try another. The clever pupil, on the other hand, may be indolent, or conceited.

and if so, he will require moral stimulation in one direction, and repression in another.

Noisy and Quiet

Some pupils are much more restless and noisy than others. Some, indeed, through home training or natural timidity, are very quiet and shy in Sunday School. Such pupils are the better of a little gentle drawing out by the teacher; but to do this, he must possess the pupil's confidence. And to possess that confidence, his purpose must not be too obvious. Brook trout are not caught in large numbers by the fisherman who plunges about and shouts, and shows himself in full view. And the confidence of shy pupils is not readily won by the teacher whose whole bearing is virtually an announcement in these terms:—"Now, my little man, I am about to secure your confidence and draw you out!" Respect the personality of even the youngest pupil. Never commit the sacrilege of entering unbidden into the inner chambers of his life.

This leads me to remark upon a fact which has often been noticed. The same child may be reserved with one teacher, but frank and confiding with another. No doubt the manner of a child's response to our approaches depends as much upon us as upon him. Your personality may be attractive to one pupil, and unattractive to another. Each of us has his likes and dislikes in matters of food, dress, companionships, occupations, and the like; so the children have their preferences and aversions; and a teacher's prospects of being of any real service to a pupil who entertains for him an unconquerable dislike, are small indeed. One of the delicate duties of the superintendent is to consider such cases of "misfit," and to make readjustments wherever possible.

It will be understood that in the foregoing we have made only some broad distinctions of temperament and disposition. It is not an easy matter to label every child as sensory or motor, as clever or dull, as quiet or noisy. Only those of somewhat strongly marked characteristics can be ticketed off in this way. And yet the classification is useful, for it helps us not only to characterize individuals, but to individualize characteristics, for purposes of study.

Boys and Girls

Something, perhaps, should be said of the leading differences between the sexes, so far as these are of interest to the Sunday School teacher. Yet we hesitate to pronounce on this matter, for almost every opinion we have formed regarding these differences has been to some extent contradicted by experience. Possibly discipline is a somewhat easier matter in a class of girls than in a class of boys. Possibly also girls are more willing than boys to do plodding routine tasks. On the other hand, boys are more likely to appreciate being thrown upon their own resources, and being required to do things independently, or find their own way out of difficulties.

Of one thing we may be tolerably confident : in the period of childhood there is practically no difference between the sexes, so far as the teacher's work is concerned. Primary class teachers need hardly think of their pupils as males and females : they are simply children. Even in the next period the differences are not very marked. The boy develops a certain pride of power, while the girl begins to show signs of that grace and delicacy which by and by will be her leading charm. It is in the third period that sex characteristics show themselves in fulness, and make the teacher's task

a peculiarly difficult one. One word may be said to all teachers. Most persons are better fitted to teach one of the sexes than the other, or better fitted to teach in one of the grades than in another. It is perhaps impossible to say beforehand what sort of a class any given individual is best fitted to teach. Experience alone can answer this question; and every teacher should be willing to test himself until he "finds his level." It is occasionally the duty of the superintendent to ask a teacher to give up a class in which he is not succeeding, and take another, in the hope that he may succeed with it. If the teacher is really anxious to magnify his calling, he will be not only willing, but eager, to have himself placed where he can do the best work.

Home Experience

Our pupils not only differ from one another in sex, age, temperament and disposition, but they come from all sorts of homes. Some are being brought up by parents of refinement and culture, some by parents of rude and uncouth manners, and some have no parents at all. Some of them dwell in homes filled with the atmosphere of the Christian life, some where religious indifference reigns, and others again where the Christian faith is openly scoffed at, or violently opposed. Too much emphasis can hardly be laid on the necessity of making our teaching in the school adjust itself to all the conditions affecting the scholar's life; and if this is to be done, we must in some way discover, as fully as possible, what those conditions are.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CLASS : MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLINE

Most teachers have to deal, not with an individual pupil, but with a class, the members of which differ from one another in temperament, intellectual power, and moral manageableness. Even in the most carefully graded school this variety will be found ; and the greater the variety, the greater the demands upon the teacher's pedagogical skill.

Class Discipline

The maintenance of order is a fundamental problem of class instruction. No real teaching can be done without order and attention. Hence we consider first the subject of class management and discipline.

The crux of the whole situation lies in the one word *interest*. Secure the pupils' interest, and you have solved the problem of class discipline. A group of boys gathered about a newspaper office, reading the bulletin of the lacrosse match, give attention in spite of all the distracting noises of the street. Why ? Simply because they are interested. And they will remember the score. Why ? Because they gave close attention to the bulletin. They remember because they attend ; and they attend because they are interested. To awaken interest is the teacher's initial problem.

How to Arouse Interest

" But how are we to arouse the interest of our pupils in the Bible lesson ?" some teacher will ask. The question is a fair one, and deserves an answer.

(1) See that the physical conditions are favorable. Do not have too large a class. See that your scholars have comfortable seats, and that they are arranged in the way best adapted for teaching and

control. The ideal is to have each scholar as near to the teacher as possible without crowding, and to have all the scholars equally near. This is not easy to manage, but the semi-circle or the hollow square is probably the best arrangement. If your scholars cannot all be equally near you, there are some who should have the preference in this matter. If you have a scholar who is defective in hearing or vision, place him near you. If you have one who is particularly inclined to mischief, place him near you. If you have two or more scholars who are mischievous, do not have them sitting together if you can avoid it. But make all these arrangements without letting your purpose be too obvious. Do not let your pupils see that you consider some better than others. There is no surer way of making a scholar behave badly than to let him see that you expect bad behavior from him : what you expect, you are likely to get. Do not look for trouble. The greatest disciplinarians are men who, though keenly vigilant all the time, never appear to be watching their pupils at all.

(2) Be careful of your manner and voice. These may seem small things, but they are important. The teacher's voice should be clear without being loud. Many a good teacher's work has been ruined, either because his scholars could not hear him, or because they could hear the teacher of the next class better. It is idle to expect scholars to give attention under such conditions. Practise to make every one of your own scholars hear, and no one else. In manner and bearing avoid all extremes. Cultivate dignity without haughtiness, refinement without foppishness, geniality without buffoonery, and tender feeling without morbid sentimentality. Be firm, but not overbearing ; decided, and yet open to suggestions from your scholars. Be kindly

and free in your manner, but never descend to cheap familiarity.

(3) **Be interested yourself. Interest is contagious.** Be interested in the truth, and in the pupil; and if you are not much interested in either of these to begin with, get better acquainted with them, and your interest will grow. The better you know them, the more you will be interested in them, and the more you are interested in them, the better you will want to know them.

(4) **Be thoroughly prepared.** This matter of preparation has already been dealt with. Here we need only insist upon it once more as an essential condition of the highest teaching.

(5) **Discover the pupil's interest.** He may not be interested in the lesson, but he is sure to be interested in something. You must find that something, and make it the fulcrum by which to move him to an interest in the lesson. The interest you are seeking to arouse cannot be created out of nothing, except by a miracle, and you cannot work miracles. You must develop the new interest out of existing interests. The following is an example of how this was done in one case. The class consisted of five little girls, and the lesson was "Elijah Discouraged." The teacher began:—"There is a big word in the lesson title; what is it?" Answer, "Discouraged." "Do you know what it is to be discouraged?" "Yes." "Were you ever discouraged, Clara?" "Yes." "When?" "When I couldn't get my arithmetic right at school." "And you, May?" "When I tried my best to amuse the baby, and he cried all the more." And so it went on all through the class. Then, by means of these actual experiences of the pupils, a sort of rough statement was drawn from them as to what discouragement means,—"To feel bad—'cause you can't get along with something you want to do."

Without any attempt to amend this definition, the teacher went on to ask what Elijah had been doing, and how he came to be under the juniper tree, and what he said, and how he felt ; so gradually bringing out the fact that he was "feeling bad because he couldn't get along with something he wanted to do." Interest in Elijah and his troubles was "grafted on" to the personal interests of the pupils.

(6) Give everyone in the class something to do. Nothing kills interest so effectually as idleness. Give each one something to do in advance if possible, so that he will come to the school with his interest already somewhat aroused. Give him something to do during the teaching period, so that his interest shall not get a chance to slacken. Your business, as has been well said, is not to spare him trouble, but to make him take trouble of a certain sort. One of the most indisputable axioms of all education is that upon which Froebel laid so much stress, namely, that education consists essentially in the development of the pupil by means of his self-activity.

(7) Do not starve interest by slowness, nor choke it by haste, nor smother it by irrelevancy. Permit no illustration or digression that will divert interest from the main line of the teaching you have in view. Be ready to welcome any suggestion that will lead to a better way of treating the subject, but be skilful to set aside suggestions that would lead to a worse way of doing it.

(8) Start right and stop right. It is possible to begin so clumsily, so hesitatingly, or so ponderously, as to kill interest in advance. Well begun is half done. If you start in such a way that your scholars know at once that you have something of great importance for them, something which you have thoroughly prepared, and in which you are intensely interested ; if you start by putting every member of the class to work at something ; if you start by

asking them to tell you something, rather than by telling them something, your chances of success will be infinitely improved.

And it is equally important to finish right. Do not let the interest dwindle and die out. Of course the interest should be satisfied, and as it is satisfied, it tends to die out, but the ideal teaching ends with the special interests of the particular lesson satisfied, but with the general interest in the whole series of lessons, or in the truth at large, vastly increased.

[CHAPTER IX.

THE CLASS : PRESENTING, QUESTIONING, ILLUSTRATING, ENFORCING

The object of all good teaching is to get divine truth translated into human life and character. The first step toward this is to bring the mind and truth into contact.

The Art of Presentation

(1) Truth should be presented at the right time. We do not force food upon a child who is not hungry; neither should we force truth upon a mind that is not ready for it. We should try to make the mind of the pupil ready for new truth by skillful questioning upon the old, which will show him the limits of his knowledge, and make him anxious to extend those limits. (2) Truth should be presented in the right amount. Wise feeding, whether of the body or of the soul, satisfies and yet does not satisfy. The immediate craving is allayed, but the child is hungry again after a time, and wants more of that

same food. (3) Truth should be presented in the right way. Connect the present lesson with the past lessons, and all the parts of the present lesson with one another, so that each step will arise naturally out of the preceding, and prepare the way for what is to follow. (4) Truth should be presented in intelligible language. I do not say in easy words; our pupils are entitled to all the resources of the language, so soon as they can appropriate them; and even a new and difficult word may sometimes be used without explanation, provided it be used in such a context, that its meaning can be discovered by the pupil himself from that context. Your words should be appropriate and intelligible; they need not always be easy. (5) Truth should be presented in the garb of the concrete and pictorial so far as possible, especially in the primary classes. Little children find it hard to grasp abstract statements of doctrine, just as they find it hard to conceive vast distances in space or long periods of time.

The Art of Questioning

The value of questioning lies in the fact that it compels the mind to active reconstruction of the truth. Though we cannot elicit what is not there to be elicited, yet there are in the pupil's mind many ideas in an undeveloped state—"without form, and void"—which by skilful questioning can be rounded out and transformed into clear knowledge.

What Sort of Questions to Ask

(1) Every question should be timely. Neither too soon nor too late; but just at the "psychological moment." (2) Every question should be clear and unambiguous; otherwise it will discourage the scholar and make him inattentive. (3) No question should contain its own answer; though an elliptical question may be used with good effect,

provided it does not carry too much information in itself. "Moses and Elijah talked with Jesus about——?" is a good question ; but "Moses and Elijah talked with Jesus about his decease which he was to accomplish at——?" is a bad question, because it tells too much, and leaves the pupil with too little to do. (4) Generally the question should require more than "yes" or "no" for an answer ; but this rule has many exceptions. "Did David use Saul's armor in fighting the giant?" requires only the answer "no"; and yet it is a good question, especially if followed immediately by the question, "Why not?" (5) Generally our questions should not be long or involved in statement ; and yet if the question can be more clearly stated by many words than by few, we should use the many words. Do not sacrifice clearness to brevity. (6) Questions of a private and personal nature should be asked in private and not before the class. Sometimes, however, it is well to ask such questions of the whole class, requesting that each one shall give the answer, not to you, but to his own conscience and to God.

How to Ask Them

Some questions should be thrown out to the whole class, without specifying individuals ; in other cases we should call upon individuals for an answer. In the latter case the question should be stated first, then the individual called upon. This keeps everyone on the alert. For the same reason we should question the pupils in irregular and unforeseen order ; taking care, however, not to neglect anyone. Our questions should be right to the point, asked in an earnest spirit, in the expectation of an answer in the same spirit.

Answers

All answers should be treated with respect, if they are seriously given, however wrong they may

be. The teacher will find, indeed, in the erroneous answers of his class, helpful suggestions as to his own procedure. Wrong answers show just where the pupil's mind is at the moment, and just what help he needs to put him on the right track. Or a wrong answer may show the teacher how clumsy his question was, and how he may amend it. Out of several imperfect answers the teacher may sometimes forge one good and satisfactory one. Every honest attempt, then, should be treated with consideration. If it contains even a grain of truth, find that grain, and make it the means for the discovery of further grains. If it is absolutely wrong, try to find the cause of the error, and help the child to rectify it.

The Art of Illustration

The value of illustration lies in the fact that it appeals to the senses and to the imagination. The two chief forms of illustration available in the Sunday School are the picture and the story. The picture can be used most effectively in a class that has a room to itself, or in the superintendent's review of the whole school. It should be simple in its construction, and not so attractive in itself as to draw attention away from the thing it represents. Besides the pictures that are hung on the wall or drawn on the blackboard, there is the "word picture" which can be used in any and every class, and the materials for which can be drawn from all the realms of nature and all the relationships of human life. In this as in all else, the Great Teacher is our matchless model. The deepest truths were made clear, in His teaching, by constant reference to such common things as the lilies of the field and the fowls of the air.

The Story

The three essentials of a good story, according to Patterson DuBois, are that it be apt, vivid, and

wholesome. It should be appropriate to the child's experience, intelligible to him, and should really illustrate the point in hand. It should be vivid, every action and character standing out clearly. And it should not, either directly or indirectly, suggest undesirable thoughts to the child's mind. Illustrations showing the evil consequences of sin should be sparingly used, lest they suggest the very sin you wish to avoid. The story need not always be true in the sense that the narrated events actually occurred ; but it should be true in the sense that those events are conceivable and rational. The story should arise naturally out of the teaching, and not be dragged in. The illustration should be by means of familiar material, but not necessarily of something the child has seen. " The little foxes that spoil the vines " can be understood by children who never saw a fox ; for all children have seen animals that spoil things ; and after all, it is not so much the fox as the spoiling, that contains the vital point.

Bible stories are generally admitted to be unexcelled as material for illustration. Every teacher, especially of young children, should saturate his mind with these stories, and study carefully the best ways of telling them.

A good story, well told, does not require to have its "moral" pointed out. It will carry its own moral and the alert mind of the child will be pretty sure to make the application for himself. But while the moral need not be expressly stated, it should not be smothered beneath the mere trappings of the narrative.

The Art of Enforcing

We desire that our scholars shall not only know the truth, but feel it and live it. How can we accomplish this result ?

First of all, our own lives should show that we are in earnest about these things. The consciousness that we desire their highest good, and that not by fits and starts, but constantly ; that we think much about it and pray unceasingly for it ; and that our own daily life attests the value of the things we teach ; will be certain to make a strong impression upon their minds.

Again, we should be hopeful and expectant regarding spiritual results. We should have confidence in the truth. Jesus said the truth would make us free ; and as we teach it, we should have faith in its mighty, regenerating power. And we should so teach it, that the idea of its being acted out in our scholars' lives should be unmistakably present, though it need not always be stated in so many words.

When the class as a whole, or any individual, is urged to decision in spiritual things, the highest motives, love of God, of man, of righteousness, of truth, for their own sakes, should be appealed to, so far as possible. The hideousness of sin, and the terrors of punishment, are ideas which little children can scarcely appreciate, and which for many reasons should not be prominent in their instruction. Talk to them a great deal more about the goodness of Jesus than about the badness of Judas.

CHAPTER X.

THE CLASS: REVIEWING, MEMORIZING, HOME STUDY

Reviewing

The importance of repetition need hardly be dwelt upon. Everyone knows that a single reading

or hearing of a thing is seldom sufficient to fix it permanently in the mind. Children especially, being less able to concentrate their attention than adults, need frequent repetitions of the truth in order to secure its permanent acquisition.

Children do not dislike reviewing. If carried on in a bright and skilful way, there are few things they enjoy more. If they know that they are going to be questioned upon the work gone over, they will take a pride and pleasure in showing how well prepared they are for that testing. It is a delight to anyone, young or old, to be conscious of the possession of thorough knowledge. A smaller quantity of material well learned, is better, as a rule, than a larger quantity only half digested. This does not mean that we should exhaust one topic before going on to the next, which is impracticable and unpedagogical; but that whatever is learned should be so fixed by repetition as to become a permanent possession. Here are some suggestions for class reviewing:—

(1) Make the review an essential and constant feature of your teaching in the class, so that each scholar will know that he will be questioned upon the work gone over. (2) Lead up to the lesson of the day by asking a few questions upon previous lessons. This will establish a clear connection between the various lessons, and keep the entire series before the mind as a single intelligible development. Do not begin by telling the class what the last lesson was about, but ask them to tell you. During this drill let all Bibles be closed, including the teacher's. (No Lesson Helps, of course, will be permitted in the classes). (3) At the end of each lesson reserve sufficient time, if possible, for a brief review of that lesson, so fixing its main features in the pupils' minds, and making the next review of it easier. (4) Do not enter into details

in reviewing, lest you weary your pupils, and rob the new lesson of a part of the time that belongs to it. Seek only to bring out the most important points. (5) Do not always review the same lesson in exactly the same words, lest you stifle thought instead of stimulating it, and lead the scholars to believe that you have exhausted the lesson in a few fixed, formal statements. The purpose of the review is to fix permanently some great ideas ; the words are of secondary importance.

Memorizing

Some educationists deprecate altogether the memorizing of anything that is not perfectly understood. This is an extreme view. If the child waits until he perfectly understands, he will never memorize anything that is of value : for any truth that is of real value has more in it than can be thoroughly comprehended even in a lifetime. We should of course avoid the opposite extreme. It is positively cruel to compel a child to memorize words which convey no meaning to his mind. But all our knowledge is relative and partial ; and just as soon as the child has sufficient understanding of a passage to appreciate it in some measure, he may be asked to commit it to memory, provided it is of such a character, in regard to the value of its thought and the beauty of its form, as to make that desirable. And in these respects no other material is quite equal in value to some of the gems of our Biblical literature.

Home Study

The home is not always the helper of the school. And yet the teaching period is so short in the school, that without the co-operation of the home the teacher's work is seriously handicapped. What can he do to help his scholars in this matter ? For

it is not merely a question of preparing for the work of the school, but also of the formation in the scholar of a habit of continuous and regular Bible study, which is a still more important thing.

The teacher must be a diligent Bible student himself. The contagion of his example will do much. Then he should cultivate a knowledge of each scholar and his home conditions, so as to render the most helpful service to each in his private life, including his home study. He should give some simple directions from time to time, regarding the preparation of the next lesson, and Bible study in general. And he should teach in such a way as to make his pupils feel that they are his fellow-investigators, upon whose help he relies. If they feel this, they will prepare the lesson during the week, at least in some measure.

In this connection we can hardly refrain from appealing strongly to parents to co-operate in this matter, by making daily Bible study a permanent feature of the home life. There is probably no better time and place than the daily worship at the family altar, for the inculcation of a love for the Bible and a knowledge of its priceless truths.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SCHOOL: ITS HISTORY, PURPOSE, AND RELATION TO THE CHURCH

Its History—Among the Hebrews

The subject of religious education has in every age of the world engaged the earnest attention of thoughtful minds. Among the Hebrews especially,

education was of a decidedly religious character. To know the God of his fathers, and the law of his God, was considered of all things the most important for the Hebrew child. Long before there were any schools in the proper sense of the term, parents were solemnly enjoined to see to the religious instruction of their children, as well as to teach them to read and write their mother tongue. The Book of Deuteronomy is full of exhortations to the people to teach diligently to their children the things that had been revealed to them : the wonders of their history, the good providence of God over them, and the majestic precepts of their law. Some of the best of the kings, such as Jehoshaphat, made careful provision for the systematic instruction of the people in the law of the Lord. After the exile the whole subject was gone into still more thoroughly, under the leadership of men like Ezra ; and great importance was attached, not only to the knowledge of the law of God, but also to learning in general. The scribes, or men of the Book, made it the business of their lives to interpret and transcribe the law, so as to bring it within the reach of the people. The synagogues, with the schools attached thereto, became the centres of propagation of a somewhat advanced learning. Though the teaching in these schools was mechanical in the extreme, the scholars doing almost everything by rote-memory, yet the spirit was good, and the teachers for the most part very patient and sympathetic in their dealings with the pupils. Many improvements were made from time to time in the Jewish schools, and down to our own day the Hebrew people have continued to be strong advocates of education, especially of religious education.

In the Christian Church

The Christian church, from its very inception, has interested itself in the education of its members

and their children, as well as in that of the heathen outside its pale. The teacher was a recognised officer of great importance in the early church, and the preaching of the apostles probably resembled teaching more nearly than the preaching of the modern pulpit. Schools were established for the instruction of those who were applicants for baptism and church membership, and other schools for those who were to be preachers and ministers.

With the Reformation came a great revival in the matter of education, both secular and religious. But the religious instruction tended to degenerate into polemical discussion of theological doctrines. Nevertheless the Protestant church made of education so powerful an instrument for its own propagation, that the Catholic church found it necessary to do something also in the way of education, to save itself from being destroyed by its great rival. The schools of the Jesuits, with their systematic organization and their comparatively skilful methods, exerted for a time a wonderful influence in behalf of the church of Rome.

The Modern Sunday School

The most noteworthy systematic movement for religious instruction in the Protestant church within the last two centuries, is that with which the name of Robert Raikes is associated. Raikes' first school was opened in the year 1780 or 1781, in the City of Gloucester, England. It was intended for the children of the poor, to keep them from the street, and to give them some instruction, secular as well as religious, on the Sabbath day. At first the teachers were paid, and the instruction was carried on for four or five hours of the day. The movement seems to have met a great need, and to have attained a widespread popularity. In the third year from its beginning, Raikes' school had

an attendance of two or three hundred, and by the year 1787 the movement had spread to many parts of the country, and the enrolment included a quarter of a million children. Since that time the interest in religious instruction has constantly increased, while method in work and administration have steadily improved until we have reached the condition of things with which our readers are familiar.

Purpose of the School

In these days of widespread popular education the Sunday School as a rule confines itself to religious instruction. It has been defined as a school of the word of Christ, whose purpose it is to bring the scholars to Christ, to build them up in the knowledge of Christ, and to train them for the service of Christ. All who can profit by religious instruction are eligible for membership as pupils. The school should, in fact, make provision for the instruction of persons of every age, and of every degree of attainment. It is not therefore, exclusively a school for children, but a Bible school, a school of the Christian life, for all who need help in these things.

Relation of the School to the Church

The school is properly a part or department of the church, and not a separate organization. Its officers as a rule should be members of the church, and their appointment should be subject to its approval. The pastor of the church should be *ex officio* head of the school, as the superintendent is its executive head. When at all possible, the pastor's presence in the school should be the rule and not the exception. The same should be said of all the members of the church. It is their duty and privilege, not only to participate in the public worship of the church, but also to have a regular

part in its teaching meetings. The school is the church at work studying and teaching the scriptures. At the regular business meetings of the congregation, when reports are given by the various departments, this department also should report fully upon its work. The work of the school should also be kept before the attention of the congregation in other ways, such as by frequent pulpit announcements and references, and by an occasional special sermon. The whole body of the church, made up of its individual congregations, should keep in vital touch with the matter of religious instruction, devising measures for its extension and improvement. Not only its ministers, but all others who desire to teach in its Sabbath Schools, should be duly trained for the work.

CHAPTER XII

THE SCHOOL : ITS ORGANIZATION AND EQUIPMENT

Organization is a means to an end ; and as such, it should never be permitted to overshadow the end, but should serve it in the most perfect way possible. As a perfect machine has not a single wheel too many or too few, so a complete Sunday School has only such officers, committees, rules of order, etc., as are sufficient to make everything work smoothly. All machinery should be tested with a view to the work which the school has to do ; and if there is, in the existing organization, a real work with no one to do it, or a real worker with nothing to do, then the constitution of the school should be amended.

Departments

No rules can be laid down to govern all schools, except the most general. The conditions vary so widely, from the great city school, with its many hundreds of members and its commodious building, to the tiny mission school, with a dozen or so of pupils, and only one small room at its disposal. The ideal, of course, is to have plenty of competent teachers and officers ; well graded classes for all ages, from four to fourscore, including a class for the training of teachers ; and a separate room for each class, with a large assembly room for opening and closing exercises ; and some provision for those who cannot attend the sessions of the school. At present this ideal is rarely even approximately reached ; but we should approach it as nearly as may be possible in the circumstances in which we are placed.

The Pastor

We have already indicated the pastor's relation to the school. By virtue of his office he is at the head of this, as of all the departments of the congregation's work. But for this very reason he will confine his attention chiefly to large matters of general policy, leaving the details of administration to others. He will be the spiritual counsellor of every member of the school, from the superintendent down. He will seek in every way to enlist the sympathy and co-operation of the parents in the homes, and of the entire congregation in the work of the school, making it his aim, as some one has said, to have " the entire school at church, and the entire church at school." So far as his engagements permit, he will attend the school, and where desirable and practicable, will conduct the training class for teachers and those preparing to teach. He will keep himself thoroughly informed in Sunday

School pedagogy, and will never lose sight of the momentous importance of the school, nor permit anyone else to do so, if he can help it.

The Superintendent

"To every man his work." The teacher is the head of the class; the pastor is the head of the congregation. The superintendent stands midway between these; he is the head of the school—a man under authority, having soldiers under him. He is amenable to that authority by which he was appointed; and that authority should be the church. He should be chosen on the same grounds on which Stephen and his colleagues were elected, namely:—as a man "of good report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom." That is to say, he should be a man who has the confidence and respect of the community, against whose social character and business integrity there is no whisper of reproach. He should be a man endowed with spiritual gifts, deep piety, and devotion to the work of soul winning. And he should possess a reasonable measure of that executive ability, tact, patience, knowledge of human nature and ability to deal with it, which are so necessary for his important work. As his appointment should be made with great care, so he should not be removed without good reason, nor unless a better man can be put in his place.

The superintendent must superintend. He must oversee. He must stand on the bridge, with his hand on the wheel and his eye on the compass. He must so conduct the school that it shall do its best work. He will therefore have the chief word regarding the appointment and removal of teachers; but he will deal with these matters in consultation with the pastor and officers of the church. He will study his teachers, and give them classes suited to their abilities. He will study the scholars, with a view

to their best arrangement and seating in classes and their physical comfort. If the building is unsuited to the needs of the school, he will lay the matter before the proper authorities, and endeavor to get the defect remedied. If unsuccessful in this, he will be patient, remembering that much good work has been done under very disadvantageous conditions.

He will study his Bible as carefully as though he were a teacher, and will specially saturate his mind with the central truth contained in the lesson, in order that he may so review that lesson, in five minutes, as to stamp its central truth forever upon the minds of the scholars. He will visit the teachers and scholars in their homes, and will encourage them to visit him in his. He will know who are absent with good reason, and who are absent without good reason. He will see that the pastor is informed of cases requiring his attention. He will be constantly on the lookout for new members for the school. He will endeavor to bring the whole church into the school; and will go outside the congregation, seeking to bring in all who are within reach of his school and not otherwise engaged during its sessions.

He will do everything in his power to retain as permanent members those who have been brought in, enlisting them in service, and making them love the school, so that they in turn will become recruiting agents to bring others in. He will be early in his place to bid the others welcome. He will begin exactly on time; and will do his best to secure regularity and punctuality on the part of all. In the exercises of the school he will seek to combine brightness and good cheer with that reverence and tenderness which befit the day, the place, and the purpose. In his manner he will try to combine vigor and decision with kindness and quiet dignity.

He will have as few rules as possible, but will live up to them. He will have as few signals as possible, but such as he has will be simple and direct, and the school will be trained to respond instantaneously to them. He will know the value of music, will try to get every one to sing, and will seek the best available talent for leadership in this important part of the service. He will know what books are in the library, and will occasionally recommend a good book, or call upon the librarian to do so. He will plan carefully for the quarterly review, aiming to make it a bright, interesting, and valuable service, participated in by all. He will sacredly respect the teaching period as time belonging to his staff, and will not permit any interference with their work during that period. He will be the trusted confidant of every teacher, and the warm personal friend of every scholar in the school. And he will be loyal to the church ; promoting its interests, announcing its services, giving the pastor an honored place in the school, and seeking to make the school a real effective contributor to the church's life. He will hold himself open to new ideas and suggestions ; will read the best Sunday School literature, attend the best conventions and institutes, visit other schools occasionally, and communicate with other workers.

The Assistant Superintendent

In large schools there should be an assistant superintendent, whose duty it will be to attend to all matters of detail, so as to leave the superintendent as free as possible for the general conduct of the school exercises. He will be always prepared to teach, should his services be required ; and he will take the superintendent's place in case of his absence.

The Teacher

The great business of the school is to teach. The school is an educational institution. Given a school with pupils, and whatever else it may dispense with, it cannot do without teachers.

We have already devoted two chapters to the task, qualifications, and preparation, of the teacher, and several more to his work with the individual pupil and with the class. Nothing further need be said here, except to point out that the perfect unity of the school, its singleness of purpose, is one of the strongest factors in its success. The teachers of any school, therefore, should form a solid body, a unit in the true sense, having strong sympathy with one another, and mingling their best efforts for the advancement of their common work. There should be no petty jealousies among them. They should be loyal to one another, to the superintendent, to the pastor, to the church in which they hold so high an office, and to the parents of the children committed to their charge, respecting the parents' wishes, and the customs prevalent in the homes, so far as this is consistent with loyalty to Christ.

The Secretary and Treasurer

The secretary will keep an accurate record of the attendance, transactions and contributions of the school, and conduct its official correspondence. The office of treasurer may or may not be combined with that of secretary, according to circumstances.

The Librarian

In addition to his ordinary duties, of keeping the books in order, lending them out, and seeing that they are returned at the proper time and in good condition, the librarian may do good service by keeping a keen look out for new books of the right sort, advising with regard to their purchase, and

the removal from the library of any unsuitable ones that may be found there.

The Musical Director

Every voice should be enlisted in the service of song ; and nearly all children will sing if the music be good and the leadership efficient. Boys, for some unknown reason, sing less than girls. Special effort should be made to get them to sing. The musical director should seek to inculcate a love for hymns and tunes of a high order, and a true spirit of worship in the service of song.

The Missionary Committee

The great work of the church is to extend the kingdom of Christ on earth. The school should take its share in this : it should in practice be a missionary organization. Instruction should be given in missions, and by means of a missionary committee, or in some other definite way, provision should be made for gathering and allotting the contributions of the classes to mission work at home and abroad.

Material Equipment

Every school should have a good blackboard, and a few large, clear maps, showing outlines and chief places, rather than details. There should be a library, containing stories for the children, something a little heavier for senior pupils, and some books especially fitted to help the teachers in their work. Scholars should be encouraged to have their own Bibles and hymn books, but a supply of these should be kept on hand, to provide for any lack.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TRAINING OF THE WORKER

We have surely recognised by this time the magnitude of the Sunday School worker's task, and the high standard of personal character and intellectual qualifications required by him who would undertake this great work. If education means all that we take it to mean, and if religious education be the very crown and keystone of the whole, then there is no other work that should be taken more seriously, and none for which more careful preparation should be made. This preparation should include scientific Bible study, scientific child study, and scientific study of the best methods of working.

Agencies for This Training

Some agencies for this preparation are already in more or less effective operation. We have high-class Sunday School periodicals doing excellent service to thousands of workers. There are also many excellent books on the subject. We have conventions from time to time in the larger centres giving help and stimulus to those who attend. But only a minority get the benefit of these. Moreover the time of even the longest convention is so limited that anything like thorough training there is out of the question. The Sunday School Institute, the Summer School, the Teacher Training Course, and the Teacher Training Secretary, or similar officer, bid fair to become universal and permanent features of the work. Let us speak of four desiderata, some of which are already partially realised in some localities. We need competent agencies for the training of the pastor (as a Sunday School worker) of the superintendent, of those who

are already teachers, and of those who are to be teachers.

The Training of the Pastor

We have seen how great the influence of the pastor can be in all the work of the Sunday School, as the official head of the entire congregation ; as a counsellor of the superintendent and teachers, as a leader in the training of the workers, as an agent for the awakening of the parents' interest, and for bringing the home and the school into close and fruitful co-operation. Now the pastor should be trained for all this during his college course. The theological student should be required to take thorough courses in the psychology of childhood, in scientific pedagogy, in the history and principles of religious education, and in the relation of pastoral work to the Sunday School. And every graduate in theology should leave his college deeply impressed with the thought that no part of his future work is more important than that which he can do through his Sunday School.

The Training of the Superintendent

This is a more difficult matter, since nearly all superintendents are laymen, whose secular calling occupies their time to such an extent as to make a college course impossible. The salaried superintendent, trained in college for his profession, and devoting his whole life to the work, may be a feature of Sunday School work in time to come, and is even now not altogether unknown ; but in the meantime every theological seminary should be prepared to give courses for superintendents, in case there should be any who are in a position to take them. Again, in any city, town, or large village, there might be a Superintendent's Association, meeting occasionally for the interchange of

ideas, and the study of problems, methods, and difficulties. But probably the shortest road to the average superintendent is through the trained pastor, who will confer often with him, and give him, so far as possible, the benefit of his professional training.

The Training of the Teachers

As the college helps the pastor, and the pastor helps the superintendent, so the pastor and the superintendent may help the teachers. First, by means of the Teacher Training Course, and secondly, by means of the Teachers' Meeting. In the teacher training course general principles and methods of work are learned; in the teachers' meeting the special conditions and problems of the local work are considered.

The Teacher Training Course

The Teacher Training Course is intended both for those now engaged in teaching, and for prospective teachers. It should seek to bring the present staff of teachers up to the highest degree of efficiency, and to be a permanent and reliable source of supply from which the ranks of the workers in the Sunday School may be constantly replenished. Every Christian young man and woman in the school should be thought of as a possible future teacher. Of course, some may prove to be unfitted for the work, and many more will be prevented by various causes from taking it up; yet there is no harm in thinking of them as possible teachers, and getting them to think of themselves as such. They should be included in the training class, meeting at some convenient time during the week, and say for six or seven months in the year. The training class should be conducted by the best qualified person available. In most cases this will

be the pastor. The studies should embrace at least an outline of the Old and New Testaments, the great fundamental truths of our holy religion, and the principles and methods of teaching. The Bible class may become a training class, either by substituting the work of the teacher training course for the uniform lesson, or by taking ten or fifteen minutes of the lesson period each Sabbath for this course, spreading it over three or four years, the ordinary lesson meanwhile going on as usual. The Supplemental Course, especially in the matter of systematic and consecutive knowledge of the books of the Bible, their chief places, personages, and events, will prepare the scholars of the lower grades for taking up the teacher training course in due time.

The Teachers' Meeting

The Teachers' Meeting should be held weekly if possible ; but a meeting held less frequently with a full attendance, is better than a weekly meeting poorly attended. It should be presided over by the superintendent, and the pastor should usually be present. It should be a meeting to which each teacher may come with his difficulties and perplexities, discouragements and encouragements, feeling sure of the warm sympathy and wise counsel of his fellow-workers. All the teachers may here be given the benefit of what any one of them has learned through recent experience in his class. Naturally, everyone will desire to discuss next Sabbath's lesson ; but this should be done in such a way as not to relieve any teacher of the necessity of private preparation. The teachers' meeting that relieves the individual teacher of the necessity of earnest work is a doubtful boon. On the contrary, the ideal teachers' meeting is one to which every teacher comes, having already studied diligently his lesson for the next Sabbath, and prepared to give as well as to receive.

QUESTIONS

CHAPTER I.

- 1—What is the true end of the Sunday School teacher's work? Define that work, with reference to the nature of the pupil.
- 2—What are the qualifications most necessary for the teacher—
 - (a) In reference to character;
 - (b) In reference to knowledge?
- 3—How may the teacher come to understand the nature of the pupil?
- 1—What is meant by "the standpoint of Jesus"?

CHAPTER II.

- 1—What three things are involved in the teacher's preparation?
- 2—What is meant by preparing oneself; and how may this be done?
- 3—Explain the various steps in the preparation of a lesson.
- 4—In what way can the teacher prepare his pupils?

CHAPTER III.

- 1—What is meant by—
 - (a) External and internal study;
 - (b) Telescopic and microscopic study;
 - (c) Receptive and constructive study?

- 2 Show how to apply each of these methods of study
 - (a) To the Bible as a whole ;
 - (b) To any individual book in the Bible.

CHAPTER IV.

- 1--Name and define five sorts of material which may be found in a lesson, with examples of each.
- 2--What is the special value of historical and biographical material, and how should these be used in teaching ?
- 3--Discuss the use and value of the story.
- 4--What four things are necessary in teaching a doctrinal lesson ? Illustrate.
- 5--What special precautions should the teacher take in regard to the devotional and the practical lesson ?

CHAPTER V.

- 1--What is an analysis, and what is a teaching plan ?
- 2--What are the principal steps in a lesson analysis ? Illustrate.
- 3--Show how to adapt your lesson plan to each individual in the class, and to all grades of classes.
- 4 How far should one be committed to pre-arranged plans in teaching ?

CHAPTER VI.

- 1 In what respects are all children alike ?
- 2 Explain the division of human life into childhood, boyhood, youth, and manhood.
- 3 Point out the leading characteristics of each period.
- 4—Indicate how we are to adapt our teaching to their requirements.

CHAPTER VII.

- 1 Explain the terms "sensory" and "motor," as applied to pupils. Show how to deal with each of these.
- 2 How would you try to help a dull pupil ?
- 3 What is the best method of dealing with shy or timid scholars ?
- 4 -Point out any important differences of temperament between boys and girls.
- 5 What should be the teacher's attitude towards the child's home life ?

CHAPTER VIII.

- 1—Explain fully the relation of attention, interest, and learning, to one another.
- 2 Give eight ways in which the teacher may arouse and sustain the scholar's interest.

CHAPTER IX.

- 1 - Shew in detail how best to present truth to the mind in teaching.

- 2 - Explain the purpose of questioning, and the way to ask questions. What sort of questions should be asked and what sort should be avoided ?
- 3 - How should the pupils' answers be received by the teacher ?
- 4 - What is the chief value of pictorial and narrative illustration ?
- 5 - How best can the teacher get his scholars to apply the lesson to their own lives ?

CHAPTER X.

- 1 - What is the purpose of the review ?
- 2 - Point out five ways in which we may make the review effective.
- 3 - How much memory work would you require of your pupils ? Give examples of the sort of material you consider best for memorizing.
- 4 - How can the teacher get his class to study their Bibles at home ?

CHAPTER XI.

- 1 - Give a brief account of religious instruction
 - (a) Among the Jews ;
 - (b) In Christendom.
- 2 - What is the real purpose of the Sabbath School ?
- 3 - What is the true relation between the school and the church ?

CHAPTER XII.

- 1—What departments should the Sabbath School contain ?
- 2—What is the pastor's proper relation to the school?
- 3—What are the qualifications and duties of the superintendent ?
- 4—What is the true relation of the teachers of a school to one another, to the superintendent, and to the church ?
- 5—Explain the duties and qualifications of the other officers of the school.
- 6—What share should the school take in mission work ?
- 7—Give your idea of a Sabbath School library, and of any other essentials in the way of material equipment.

CHAPTER XIII.

- 1—How may the theological college help the Sabbath School ?
- 2—What is the purpose and function of the teachers' meeting ?
- 3—Explain the nature of the teacher training class, and show how to carry it on.



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